



UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**

# Sustainability Engagement Plan

## Context

Universities are uniquely placed to support a pathway to sustainable development and growth and our [Institutional Strategy \(2021-26\)](#) has sustainability as one of the core values: supporting a sustainable community and adopting best environmental practice. For the University of Bath, sustainability is about conducting our activity (our research, education, operations and engagement) in a way which embodies and addresses:

- environmental health and climate action
- social responsibility, equity and inclusion
- economic and financial sustainability

Collectively, we contribute positively to sustainability through world-class research, teaching, partnerships and collaboration. However, we also recognise that there are environmental and social impacts associated with our activities. Therefore, we have committed to maximise our contributions to a more sustainable world whilst also minimising our impacts wherever possible.

## Vision

Successfully embedding sustainability across our institution will affect almost every aspect of University business including teaching, research and professional services, and it requires support and action from our whole community of staff and students.

The plan outlined here is designed to ensure community engagement and participation that will support the University to:

- effectively integrate sustainability into our operations, culture, and academic mission as a cornerstone of our identity
- reach our sustainability commitments and goals
- prepare students and our community for a sustainable future
- build our profile and reputation locally and globally as a leader for sustainability
- support members of our community experiencing distress related to environmental crises



## Stakeholders

- University leadership
- Academic staff
- Management, specialist and administrative staff
- Facilities and operations staff
- Technical and experimental staff
- Prospective and current students, and student groups
- Students' Union (SU)
- Alumni and donors
- Local community and businesses
- Policy makers and researchers
- Higher Education (HE) sector

## Strategic objectives

1. **Raise awareness**, understanding and support for University sustainability commitments and goals, and effectively positioning us as a leader for sustainability
2. **Increase engagement** across our community to help support the transition to sustainability – changing behaviours, building supportive networks and promoting collaborative working – and to make sustainability a cornerstone of our identity
3. **Build leadership** at all levels to support the strategic aims and objectives of the Sustainability team
4. **Increase our profile** and reputation as a leader for sustainability amongst our external community of businesses, policy makers, research partners, local residents, alumni, donors, and members of the Higher Education sector

## Communications

### Approach

How we choose to represent ourselves as an institution externally is an opportunity to showcase our values, and to honestly share the challenges, failures and successes of our sustainability journey. Authentically and consistently presented, this can have a broader influence in generating sustainability awareness and action. This sits within our wider responsibilities to engage people in our research and science. Communicating



clearly and transparently why we are taking sustainability actions is an integral part of a behaviour change programme and vital for successful implementation of new policies and processes.

Working collaboratively across University teams and with the SU, each year we will deliver a series of key campaigns, events and initiatives to raise the profile and understanding of sustainability goals.

## Key messages

- The University has ambitious and challenging sustainability commitments and the work to deliver them will affect everything we do as we take a whole organisation approach.
- Sustainability represents an area of strength for the University in our research, education provision and partnership working.
- To ensure our University and community sets strong sustainable foundations for the future we must transform the way we work and study – this is not about small, incremental or optional changes.
- Sustainability transformation presents many opportunities for innovation, reputation, efficiencies, physical and mental health and wellbeing, living environment, long-term finances, air quality and much more.
- This is a collaborative effort: we need everyone to get involved, make suggestions and contribute to the journey and direction we take, in every area of the organisation.

## Evaluation

We will monitor progress against these measures in our annual all-staff and all-student climate action survey, as well as other relevant metrics and feedback. Specific targets for 2025-26 include:

- 74% staff and 55% students are aware of the University's sustainability work – target 78% and 57% respectively by 2026 annual survey
- 61% staff and 31% students are aware of the University's sustainability webpages – target 70% and 35% respectively by 2026 annual survey
- 52% of departments and 4% staff are engaged in a sustainability engagement programme (Green Impact and/or LEAF) – target 60% and 5% respectively by end of 2025/26 academic year



## Engagement

Action areas and activities are detailed in the table below.

Area	Objective
University wide	Embed formal responsibility for sustainability strategically through the University, i.e., Climate Advocates, JDs and SDPRs
	Provide sufficient information to empower departments with tools to embed sustainability
	Provide support and guidance to encourage innovation across our community, i.e., NZCC fund
Lab sustainability programme – LEAF	Establish and support internal LEAF network
	Provide regular training for lab users
	Provide resources and guidance to support lab users in taking action
	Ensure sufficient funding is available to support initiatives
	Provide regular comms to ensure ongoing awareness and engagement support
	Establish University-level commitment and targets
	Ensure our efforts align with technical and policy mechanisms to support change, such as ChemInventory system
Office sustainability programme – Green Impact	Establish and support Green Teams network
	Provide resources and guidance to support colleagues in taking sustainability action in the workplace
	Ensure sufficient funding is available to support initiatives
	Provide regular comms to ensure ongoing awareness and engagement support
	Establish University-level commitment and targets to support action
	Ensure our efforts align with technical and policy mechanisms to support change, such as infrastructure projects and new policies
Student behaviour change programme	Conduct programme of activities in campus accommodation to target a range of pro-environmental behaviours
	Provide a range of interventions and support mechanisms to enable students to address personal behaviours, i.e., diet, travel



	Collaborate with the SU to support student action, i.e., through teams and societies, as well as student voice activities
	Engage with departments to explore opportunities to embed sustainability in existing student engagement programmes, i.e., wellbeing, skills, careers.
	Hold key events and engagement activities through the year, i.e., Green Week

## Climate Champions

Students are recruited to work with the Sustainability team and Campus Services on a casual basis to deliver peer-to-peer engagements activities, including, for example, comms support, annual survey promotion, campaign support and leading student projects. Working with Campus Services they also conduct activities such as energy saving and waste reduction competitions in accommodation.

## Net Zero Carbon Campus Fund

Supported by Alumni Funding, this £5,000 annual grant is available for students and staff to apply, to fund small-scale projects that target campus emissions reduction. Grants are available for projects up to a maximum of £1,000 each. Previously funded projects include:

- Installing water butts on campus to reduce water use – completed in 2025.
- Establishing a new community garden – completed in 2025.
- Team Bath Drones sustainable design project – completed in 2025.
- E-waste investigation in EEE teaching labs – completed in 2024.
- Sustainability solutions student competition – completed in 2024.
- E-racing sustainable design project – completed in 2024.
- Dr Bike event – run in 2023.
- [Bike maintenance course](#) for staff cycling commuters – run in 2022.
- Eat Green Week by Sustainable Food VIP – run in 2022.

## Implementation

### Roles and responsibilities

Responsibility for overseeing and coordinating the implementation of actions in this plan will be led by the Sustainability team, including undertaking monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities.



Formal and informal responsibilities for undertaking action are dispersed across the University community, including the following key departments:

- Communications and Marketing
- Campus Services
- Students' Union
- Advancement Office
- Research institutes and centres (Institute of Sustainability and Climate Change, Institute for Policy Research, Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations)

## Budget and resource

The University's Sustainability Engagement Plan is supported by an annual budget of £20k.

## Evaluation and monitoring

### Annual survey

This all-staff and all-student survey is designed to capture feedback and views from across our community to help inform and guide sustainability work. It also represents a key communication activity and, as a Living Lab, it is designed and assessed in collaboration with the Psychology Department. The results of the survey provide a means to monitor progress against the actions detailed in this plan, and to monitor changes in pro-environmental behaviours across our community.

### Annual report

This captures the University's carbon footprint data, an assessment of progress against goals and commitments, case studies of successes from across our community, and transparently communicates ongoing challenges. It represents a key communication activity and is fundamental in our transparent and collaborative approach.